(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to reduce the violence; and

(c) whether Government are going to reconsider the extension of ceasefire?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) During the period of Peace Initiative there has been marginal increase in the number of incidents of militant violence. Pak backed Jehadi militant outfits have rejected the peace initiative and have stepped up violent activity in order to thwart the peace process which has been widely welcomed by the people in the state and beyond. The strategies being followed by the Security Forces to counter the terrorist violence on the ground are constantly reviewed and refined at various levels including in the Unified Headquarters keeping in view the changing ground situation and intelligence inputs.

(c) The Govt. has examined all aspects of the question in its totality and also benefited from consultations in an all party meeting on 21 February, 2001. It has accordingly been decided to further extend the period of the Peace Initiative till the end of May, 2001. Security forces have, however, been instructed to act decisively against any act of terrorist violence during the period of the peace initiative.

Visit of Hurriyat Leaders to Pakistan

1229. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation of Hurriyat leaders propose to visit Pakistan for dialogue on Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, whether their visit was mutually agreed to by both Indian as well as Pakistani Governments;

(c) whether he expressed reservations over issue of passport/visa to some of the Hurriyat leaders; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENi VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) Some Hurriyat leaders have expressed their desire to visit Pakistan.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Decisions about issue of Passport to Indian citizens are taken by Government as per law after considering all relevant factors.